

REMARKS

1. Claims 1-21 are pending. Of these claims, claims 1-13 stand withdraw, claims 14-16, 20 and 21 stand rejected, and claims 17-19 stand objected to. This communication amends claims 14, 18, and 19 and cancels claims 1-13, 20, and 21. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

2. Claims 1-13, 20, and 21 have been cancelled herein without prejudice. The Applicant reserves the right to refile these claims in a continuation application.

2. Claims 17-19 stand objected to as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. This objection is respectfully traversed as each of claims 17-19 have features which further limit claim 14 and make them allowable over the cited prior art, as confirmed by their omission in the prior art rejections. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully urged.

3. Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,132,169 to Olry *et al.* (Olry).

In response, claim 14 has been amended to include the features recited in canceled claim 17. Olry does not expressly or inherently describe a composite ceramic product where “the first and second phases form three dimensional interconnected networks of *the first and second phases, the second phase including particles which are distributed along grain boundaries of the first phase*” as now recited in claim 14. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

4. Claims 20 and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,545,337 to Hong.

Claims 20 and 21 have been cancelled without prejudice in this communication. Therefore, this rejection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

5. Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Olry in view of U.S. Patent 5,851,942 to Sacks *et al.* (Sacks).

In response, claim 14 has been amended to include the features recited in canceled claim 17. Olry in view of Sacks do not teach or suggest a composite ceramic product where “the first and second phases form three dimensional interconnected networks of *the first and second phases, the second phase including particles which are distributed along grain boundaries of the first phase*” as now recited in claim 14. Claim 15 is patentable over Olry in view of Sacks for at least the same reasons as claim 14, from which claim 15 depends. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

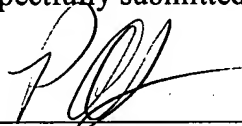
6. Claims 14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Olry in view of U.S. Patent 6,706,401 to Wapner *et al.* (Wapner).

In response, claim 14 has been amended to include the features recited in canceled claim 17. Olry in view of Wapner do not teach or suggest a composite ceramic product where “the first and second phases form three dimensional interconnected networks of *the first and second phases, the second phase including particles which are distributed along grain boundaries of the first phase*” as now recited in claim 14. Claim 16 is patentable over Olry in view of Wapner for at least the same reasons as claim 14, from which claim 16 depends. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

7. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested as it is believed that all outstanding issues have been addressed herein and, further, that claims 14-16, 18 and 19 are in condition for allowance, early notification of which is earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions or matters whose resolution may be advanced by a telephone call, the examiner is cordially invited to contact applicants’ undersigned attorney at his number listed below.

8. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional filing fees required under 37 CFR 1.16 and any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17, which are associated with this communication, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2061.

Respectfully submitted,



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